



## MARION COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

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## **Former Speedway Fire Chief charged for theft of town funds**

*Mark Watson accused of using more than \$58,000 of town funds for personal expenses*

(Indianapolis, Ind.) - Marion County Prosecutor Terry Curry announced today that criminal charges have been filed against former Speedway Fire Chief Mark Watson for the alleged theft of more than \$58,000 from the Town of Speedway. Watson has been charged with Theft (Class D Felony) and Official Misconduct (Class D Felony). Watson was the town's fire chief from June 2010 until his resignation on October 27, 2014. The charges are a result of an investigation by the Indiana State Police, Indiana State Board of Accounts and the Marion County Prosecutor's Office.

Watson has agreed to plead guilty to both counts and pay restitution to the Town of Speedway. He has also agreed to pay restitution to the State Board of Accounts for the costs associated with an audit conducted by the agency. A guilty plea hearing has been requested.

According to the probable cause affidavit, Watson is accused of using funds intended for the town for personal use over a period of four years. Watson is alleged to have opened a separate account at the Firefighters Credit Union into which he deposited funds intended for the town or the fire department. The account was opened without knowledge of the Town Board and was not authorized by the Town Board of Finance. Watson is believed to have used funds deposited into that account for personal gain.

As further alleged in the probable cause affidavit, Watson failed to turn over the town \$3,160 in cash collected as testing fees from candidates taking the Entry Level Firefighters Examination in April 2013. He is also accused of failing to remit to the town proceeds in the amount of \$2,872.46 from the sale of clothing to town firefighters.

Prosecutor Curry commended the work of investigators in the case. "A thorough and detailed investigation by the Indiana State Police and the State Board of Accounts led to these charges, and we appreciate the work of each of these agencies," Prosecutor Curry stated.

An initial hearing is expected to be scheduled in Criminal Court 24.

*A charge of a crime is merely an accusation, and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.*